

April 18, 2017

Mr. James Betley
Executive Director
Indiana Charter School Board
143 W. Market, Suite 300,
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Mr. Betley,

Please consider this a formal request to amend our application to change the location of The Excel Center from East Chicago to Hammond opening this fall; and to change the site name from Excel Center – East Chicago to Excel Center - Hammond.

In a letter dated November 22, 2016, the Indiana Charter School Board notified Goodwill LEADS, Inc. regarding approval to open an Excel Center, Fall of 2017 in East Chicago. During our research into the need for an Excel Center in Lake County, we recognized a need for more than one Excel Center in the county. The data indicated several communities in Lake County with significant numbers of adults (18 and older) without a high school diploma including Gary, East Chicago and Hammond. Relevant data for each of these communities were noted in the charter application submitted in the Fall of 2016.

Initial inroads, regarding potential sites, resulted in our request for a location in East Chicago. However, those potential sites became unavailable within a few months following the ICSB Board's approval. We immediately began searching for other potential sites through realtors and local connections. After a few weeks of not being able to locate property that met our needs in East Chicago, we extended our search into neighboring Hammond. Although it took a significant amount of time, we recently identified a location in Hammond located approximately four miles from one of the East Chicago sites that had been considered.

The Hammond site (3434 169th Street) is served by the East Chicago Transit system. We met with the ECT Director who indicated they will support this location. We also met with Gary Public Transit, which provides public transportation for Hammond; they are also willing to support us as needed. This public transportation system will allow prospective students from Hammond, East Chicago and Gary access to the Excel Center – Hammond.

The need for an Excel Center in Hammond:

- Graduation rates: The School City of Hammond 82.3%; among the lowest in Lake County ⁱ
- Adults (18+) without a high school diploma: 20.4%, equating to 11,890 individuals ⁱ
- Poverty rate: 24.9% ⁱ
- Unemployment: Hammond 6.8%; Indiana 4.1% (February 2017 data) ⁱⁱ

Community Engagement

Community interest in The Excel Center has grown through conversations with local leaders as Goodwill LEADS representatives have shared its success in South Bend. Hammond community leaders have demonstrated sincere interest in an adult learner high school that serves those who have previously dropped out of high school, enabling them to graduate with a Core 40 diploma, certifications and post-secondary credentials.

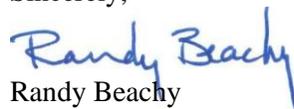
Goodwill LEADS representatives have met with several organizations in Hammond to engage the community and have been met with enthusiastic responses regarding the positive potential of The Excel Center to impact their residents. Without exception, representatives of the following organizations expressed support for The Excel Center and have provided opportunities to connect with individuals and organizations of influence in the community.

- Frank Mrvan, North Township Trustee
- Dave Ryan, Executive Director, Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce
- Karen Lauerman, President & CEO, Lake County Economic Alliance
- Christine Cid, Lake County Councilwoman, 5th District
- Pastor Kelly Williams, Greater Destiny Church
- Theresa Mayerik, Assistant Superintendent, School City of Hammond
- Joshua Long, Executive Director, Hammond Education Foundation
- Barbara Gustin, Director, School City of Hammond Head Start
- Stephen Scheckel, Chief of Police, Munster
- Mark Kiernan, President, Calumet Breweries, Inc.
- Father Charles Mosely, Our Lady of Perpetual Hope
- Frank Rosado, Director, ECT
- David Wright, Planning Manager, GPTC
- Lashawn Jones-Taylor, Program Manager, Catholic Charities
- Troy Linker, Publisher/CEO, Northwest Indiana Business Quarterly
- Sharese Dudley, Career Services Director, Indiana University Northwest
- Natalie Connors, Director of Career Development, Purdue University Northwest
- Dr. Dionne Jones-Malone, Vice President of Enrollment, Calumet College of St. Joseph
- Matt Saltanovitz, NW Region Director, Indiana Economic Development Corporation
- Capt. Jason Schaal, Northwest Indiana ARC, Salvation Army
- Carolyn Saxton, President, Legacy Foundation
- Laura Smith-Wynn, Founder and Executive Director, Indiana Parenting Institute

Lastly, Lake County is currently represented on the Goodwill LEADS Board by Mr. Louis Gonzalez, President, Ivy Tech East Chicago. With board positions becoming available this summer, the Goodwill LEADS nominating committee is considering additional board members from Lake County.

Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,



Randy Beachy
Executive Director
Goodwill LEADS, Inc.

ⁱ United States Census Bureau American Fact Finder (2015). *Educational Attainment 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*.

ⁱⁱ City-data.com (2016)